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ABSTRACT

The observation of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Committee on Performance Based Teacher Education (PBTE) on the state of the art of PBTE in 1975 are presented in this publication. The Committee states that PBTE may be defined as a process for improving the preparation and development of educational personnel. This process includes the following operations: (a) the basis for decision making about development and implementation is clearly defined, (b) outcomes for students and programs are specifically and operationally defined, (c) program design is congruent with both student and program outcomes, (d) student and program outcomes are evaluated periodically, and (e) operations within the process are revised and/or specifications are changed according to feedback from the evaluations. This report discusses the following three areas in which issues and problems in PBTE have been clearly enunciated; (a) the lack of an adequate knowledge base for designing teacher education programs, (b) the lack of procedures and instrumentation required to evaluate the performance of practitioners, and (c) the lack of sharing in decision making in educational development. The Committee also voices concern in this report over (a) the way in which PBTE is currently being viewed and implemented, (b) competencies, (c) instructional programs, (d) assessment and feedback (e) governance, (f) research, (g) program organization, (h) staff development, (i) initiation of PBTE programs, and (j) narrowness in the application of a performance based approach. (MK)

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PERFORMANCE-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION: A 1975 COMMENTARY

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PERFORMANCE-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION:

A 1975 COMMENTARY

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FOREWORD

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education acknowledges with appreciation the work of its Committee on Performance-Based Teacher Education and the supporting staff. This 1975 commentary is the fourth official statement by the Committee on the state of the art of PBTE and, like its earlier statements, reflects serious study of the performance-based approach to educational personnel development.

Through the work of this Committee, the Association has helped to develop a national awareness about the PBTE strategy for improving educational personnel development, and to stimulate healthy dialogue about this approach--its promise, its problem, and the issues. Through leadership training institutes sponsored by the Committee and through the publications it has developed, AACTE has provided opportunities for colleges and universities to study and explore a performance-based approach to teacher education. In addition, the Committee has stimulated interested institutions to experiment with PBTE and provided assistance to those colleges and universities which are already operating PBTE programs to raise the level of quality of their programs. At the suggestion of the Committee, AACTE has established a number of significant articles and monographs on the subject. Largely through the initiative of the Committee, the Association has taken (June 1973) a position opposing the mandating of PBTE as the only approach to teacher education. Through the Committee, the Association has provided guidance to member institutions regarding the utilization of a performance-based approach to educational personnel development.

It is our belief that this brief commentary is a useful summary of the state of the art of PBTE in 1975 and that it will provide further assistance to member institutions and to the education profession at large in exploring and experimenting with this approach to teacher education.

Whereas the efforts of the Committee to date have focused largely on the application of PBTE to preservice preparation of teachers, during 1975-1976 it is expected that a reconstituted Committee will give its major attention to the application of a performance-based approach to in-service education and to the preparation of other types of professional school personnel. It is our expectation that the new Committee will continue to provide effective leadership in this area of activity.

Edward C. Pomeroy
Executive Director, AACTE

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Preface

Purpose

In its earlier publications in December 1971[1] and February 1974[2], the AACTE Committee on Performance-Based Teacher Education sought to report what was going on around the country under the rubric of performance-based teacher education (or, as some prefer, competency-based), and to give some direction to the PBTE movement by further clarifying key concepts and terminology, calling attention to significant potentialities and possible pitfalls of this approach, and suggesting some specific recommendations to maximize the attainment of the potentialities and avoid the pitfalls.

Now, in this publication, the Committee reports its observations on the state of the art of PBTE in 1975. This paper is not intended to be a comprehensive revision of either of the two preceding publications. It makes no attempt to treat PBTE comprehensively. It is a series of observations -- a commentary -- on the state of the art at present rather than a definitive treatment of the subject.

Perspective of the Committee

In accordance with its original mandate from the AACTE Board of Directors, the Committee has consistently sought to serve as students of PBTE and the PBTE movement. Similarly, it has sought to refrain from projecting an advocacy stance with regard to encouraging rapid expansion of the movement. While Committee members differ with one another on many specific issues regarding performance-based teacher education, by and large they believe that the logic of this approach as they understand it holds considerable promise as one approach to reform of educational personnel development.

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[1] Stanley Elam, Performance-Based Teacher Education: What Is the State of the Art? (Washington, D.C.: The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, December, 1971).

[2] The AACTE Committee on Performance-Based Teacher Education, Achieving the Potential of Performance-Based Teacher Education: Recommendations. (Washington, D.C.: AACTE, February, 1974).

Motivated toward the improvement of schools, convinced that PBTE faces serious problems but offers substantial promise, striving for objectivity -- such is the stance from which the AACTE Committee speaks again at this time.

Audience

This publication, as was true of the two previous ones, is directed to those who are engaged in, or directly responsible for educational personnel development. It is written for "the profession" broadly defined to include elementary and secondary school teachers and administrators, college and faculty administrators, government officials responsible for the operation of schools, and professional associations of educators. The Committee hopes that it might be of interest also to laymen on boards of education or in legislative bodies. It will be of particular interest, however, to both school-based and campus-based teacher educators.

Organization

In the first section, the Committee sets forth a context for viewing PBTE by describing it as a *process*. Section two examines some of the criticisms of this approach to educational personnel development. The third section presents the Committee's concerns regarding how PBTE is currently being viewed and implemented.

PBTE as Process

The AACTE Committee on Performance-Based Teacher Education (PBTE) views PBTE as a *process* for improving the preparation and development of educational personnel. Process is defined as a series of operations leading towards (particular) ends. The process itself does not come from a particular philosophical or psychological framework; it can accommodate different and divergent positions on the training of educational personnel.

The PBTE process includes five *interrelated operations*. Each operation is distinct but dependent on all the other operations if the process is to function successfully.

1. *The basis for decision making about development and implementation is clearly defined.* The decisions to be made, who is to make them, and when they are to be made are determined and agreed upon. Failure to plan for decision making can result in a breaking down of interrelatedness of operations in the process.

2. *Outcomes for students and programs are specifically and operationally defined.* Outcomes for students are developed after determining the roles to be performed and usually include knowledge to be acquired, on-the-job skills to be mastered, and feelings and attitudes to be fostered. Student outcomes are stated so that they can be evaluated.

   Program outcomes are usually stated as program objectives. They reflect what the program designers believe about such questions as how people learn, what environments are most conducive to learning, how students should be organized, and the nature of professional roles. Program outcomes provide the basis for program evaluation.

3. *Program design is congruent with both student and program outcomes.* Instructional strategies focus on helping students acquire the specified outcomes. At the same time the instructional strategies reflect the specified program objectives.

4. *Student and program outcomes are evaluated periodically.* There is both student and program accountability in the PBTE process. Information is gathered which provides data for decisions about whether or not a student has acquired specific outcomes and how effective the program was in helping the student to acquire the specified outcomes.

5. *Operations within the process are revised and/or specifications are changed according to feedback from the evaluations.* This makes the PBTE process dynamic, in a continuous state of development and change. An anticipated result of development and change is program improvement.

The use of *process* in educational personnel development is related to general systems theory. Systems theory offers a way of looking at a total organization and all of its related operations and a systematic way of gathering information which provides the basis for rational change.

Viewing professional preparation programs in education as *process* is not a new idea. As Lindsey notes, "The idea that teacher education should prepare persons to perform designated roles and to demonstrate their competence in performance of those roles is a theme running through the history of teacher education."[3] More than forty years ago the Congress of the United States authorized The National Survey of Teacher Education. In the final volume of the survey, Summary and Interpretations, the chairman of the Survey Commission Evenden, wrote:

> If the curriculum for teachers could be based upon a thorough acquaintance with the work that teachers will be called upon to do, and also the things which they should be able to do in order to improve the existing conditions, then

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[3]Margaret Lindsey, "Competency-Based Teacher Education: Historical, Current, and Future Perspectives," in Competency-Based Education - Theory, Practice, and Evaluation (Athens, Georgia, University of Georgia, 1975).

> the prescriptions could be made in terms of providing best preparation. . . This concept of 'competency' in the field, if used as a basis for constructing professional curricula for teachers, can do much to correct the present limiting effect of the vested interests of departments which so often interfere with the larger purpose of preparing teachers.[4]

Many of the essential elements of a performance-based approach today have thier roots in the accumulated wisdom of the profession. There is within the PBTE process an opportunity to blend the conventional wisdom of teacher education with an expanding research base and a number of new and promising ideas. The convergence of these elements into an overall strategy offers promise to the improvement of preparation and career development programs for educational personnel.

The AACTE/PBTE Committee does not view PBTE as consisting of uniformly defined substance. For example, PBTE does not define what the role of the professional should be. Nor does PBTE establish a philosophic frame of reference from which one must operate. The Committee does view PBTE as a process through which substance is generated as program developers answer certain questions. The *process* is transportable and can be applied in diverse situations; the substance emerges from its application in specific settings.

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[4]E.S. Evenden, National Survey of Teacher Education, Volume VI, Summary and Interpretations, Bulletin 1933, No. 10, U.S. Office of Education (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935), p. 129.

The Criticisms of PBTE

Serious criticism of any idea, practice, or movement in education is essential to its making a lasting contribution to the improvement of educational practice. In keeping with its charge, the Committee has sought to engage in critical examination of the PBTE movement, as have other groups and individuals with varied specialties and with different degrees of contact with the movement.

The Committee believes that its own criticisms, as well as those made by other individuals and groups, should meet acceptable standards of criticism. For example, if criticism is to be influential in stimulating reflection, further investigation and research, and/or change, the critic needs to share with the listener or reader

> ...the assumptions, predispositions, biases -- e.g., the stance from which he (she) examines PBTE
>
> ...the target of criticism -- e.g., theory, ideas, proposals or practices
>
> ...the criteria employed
>
> ...the evidence on which he (she) bases the criticisms -- e.g., opinion, personal experience, research.

During the past three years the Committee has examined the PBTE movement in its many manifestations by means of varied techniques and procedures. Keeping in mind the above requirements for criticism and using as evidence data from a wide range of sources, both theoretical and practical, the Committee has made some critical observations.

The most striking observation is that many of the criticisms of PBTE today are not unique to this particular approach. They are rather an accumulation of criticism related to inadequacies of teacher education generally. The potential contributions of the movement to the improvement of educational personnel development may not have a chance to reach maturity because of the burden of historical and conventional criticisms of teacher education. The unique attributes of the performance-based approach are obscured by the continuing dominance of dysfunctional rhetoric about the

inadequacies of teacher education programs generally.

Even the best and most complete model of performance-based teacher education will not provide uncontestable resolutions to fundamental issues nor foolproof solutions to difficult and persistent problems that have plagued teacher educators for a long time. However, the Committee believes that these issues and problems are more visible and are defined more sharply than is now the case through a performance-based approach to designing, conducting, evaluating, and regenerating teacher education. Three areas in which issues and problems have already been clearly enunciated are discussed briefly here.

An adequate knowledge base for designing teacher education programs. The foundation of knowledge undergirding decisions in teacher education is less than it ought to be; but this condition is not unique to PBTE. Performance-based teacher education is a process that calls for program planners to define and validate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential to performing specific roles. The very validation of competencies necessitates constant investigations of the relationship between teacher competence and pupil learning. Hence, as more investigations of that nature take place in the normal course of program designing, it can be anticipated that the body of predictive hypotheses will increase. Such predictive hypotheses, with repeated testing and validation, make up the body of knowledge needed in determining outcomes to be achieved by prospective teachers and to be object of continuing improvement by experienced teachers.

PBTE requires continuous evaluation and feedback into program modification. This necessitates the specification of assumptions about relationships between training activities and consequences in teacher behavior. Again, when those assumptions are subjected to rigorous inquiry, as in any PBTE program they must be, the body of knowledge to be used as a source in designing teacher education programs -- learning activities for prospective or practicing teachers -- will be increased substantially.

The Committee believes that the PBTE process provides a strategy for expanding the knowledge base for teacher education provided that program operators carry out all operations.

Procedures and instrumentation required to evaluate the performance of practitioners not available. The unavailability of such procedures and instrumentation, however, is clearly not unique to PBTE programs. In fact, when a performance-based approach is fully met, it makes substantial inroads on this problem. The essential element of demonstrated performance as a basis for exit from programs (and as the basis for certification) cannot become operative without steady accumulation of means for evaluation of performance. As indicated above, the validation of competencies calls for the studying of relationships between teacher behavior and conditions created for pupil learning and/or between teacher behavior (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) and pupil outcomes. Scholarly efforts to establish such validation should produce procedures and instruments equally appropriate for evaluation of performance.

Time has come for professionals to spend less time on talking about lack of capability to assess teacher performance and to put appropriate energies on increasing that capability. The performance-based approach holds promise in this regard.

Decision making in educational development not appropriately shared. Every group which has a stake in teacher education has at one time or another expressed dissatisfaction with the present distribution of power regarding the control of educational personnel development programs. These expressions relate to teacher education generally; again, they are not unique to PBTE. It is true that the implementation of a performance-based approach makes the problem more visible but PBTE has not created the situation from which the problem evolves. The principle of shared decision making has been espoused for a long time by representatives of all groups which have a stake in teacher education. Now, there is a growing realization on the part of all these groups that educational personnel development must and should become a cooperative undertaking. The Committee believes that it is time for the profession as a whole -- and in a united way -- to get on with the business of working out alternative collaborative models. PBTE encourages the development of such models.

The Committee observes that many other criticisms (problems and issues) are applicable to both traditional teacher education and to a performance-based approach, e.g.:

- Programs lack individualization and personalization.
- Programs include too little (or too much) theory with consequent lack of usefulness or applicability in the real world.
- Programs place too little (or too much) emphasis on the liberal arts.
- Programs include too many (or too few) school-based experiences.
- Programs place too much emphasis on the present, not enough on the future.
- Programs attempt to prepare candidates for a generic teacher role, rather than for a variety of roles.
- Program design is based on the assumption that one can learn through an apprenticeship approach.

The Committee's Concerns Regarding How PBTE Is Currently Being Viewed and Implemented

As the Committee has observed colleges, schools, and professional organizations becoming involved in establishing PBTE programs, it has become increasingly concerned about the congruence of means and ends in teacher education. Our concern is not new, nor is it exclusively a PBTE issue; educational philosophers and critics have been concerned about means/ends relationships for a long, long time. A PBTE approach, however, highlights the issue in a special way. Because a PBTE program is systematic, it calls for negotiated agreements on, and the public expression of, specific program goals for and by participants in the program, and the provision of relevant learning experiences by the agencies offering the program -- experiences which are logically and empirically consistent with the expressed goals. These characteristics call for a high degree of congruence between means and ends. We think all programs of teacher education should evidence congruence between means and ends -- *for PBTE programs congruence should be an essential characteristic.*

Other concerns of the Committee are as follows:

COMPETENCIES

- The Committee observes that there is a tendency to overlook the importance of determining competencies on the basis of some definition of professional roles.

- There also appears to be a tendency to overlook the importance of defining competencies in such a way that they make possible the assessment of a student's behavior with respect to each of the competencies specified for the program.

- Caution should be exercised to ensure that competency identification and definition do not lead to program fragmentation, either through the incorporation of an assortment of specified unrelated objectives, or through the omission of experiences in the program which would lead candidates to synthesis, integration, and internalization of the specified objectives.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

- The Committee believes that the design of instructional programs may take various forms and incorporate the best of past and current programs. Whatever their design, instructional programs need to provide for the development and evaluation of the student's achievement of each of the specified competencies.

- While many PBTE programs may use instructional modules as the basis for organizing instruction and learning, their use is not necessarily essential to a performance-based approach.

- PBTE uses the field extensively, but it is not necessarily true that any program using the field is automatically performance-based.

- The importance of involving students in the design of their individual programs should not be overlooked.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

- PBTE programs are effective only if assessment procedures used are objective and reliable, and are valid measures of the competencies they purport to measure. Assessment procedures currently in use need to be strengthened and developed such that students' achievement of competencies and program effectiveness are known.

- Operators of PBTE programs need to use data derived from assessment procedures to provide feedback for improvement and validation of the program by establishing relationships between possession of the competencies developed in the program and success as a practicing professional.

- In the Committee's judgment, the existence of assessment problems does not suggest that experimentation with PBTE should cease. On the contrary, such experimentation can lead to the development of more adequate procedures and techniques.

GOVERNANCE

- The Committee observes that when almost sole attention is given to the formation of governing units (consortia) as a first step in bringing about educational personnel development, program development occurs more slowly.

RESEARCH

- The Committee now places much greater emphasis than earlier on the significance of stating and testing formal hypotheses in the design of performance-based teacher education programs.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

- The Committee observes that if all of the operations in a systems approach to PBTE programming are not operative, e.g., if evaluation does not lead to feedback and modification, programs may become crystallized and lose their regenerative power.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- The design and implementation of PBTE programs need to be accompanied with, and in some cases preceded by, well-planned staff development activities for both campus-based and school-based faculty members.

  Because PBTE results in changing the nature of the roles of many campus-based and school-based teacher educators, it is crucial that present faculty load assignment policies and reward systems be reexamined and revised to accommodate such role changes.

INITIATION OF PBTE PROGRAMS

- The Committee believes that pressures to make change -- the adoption of PBTE -- within specified narrow time frames and with inadequate resources make rational approaches to program development difficult, if not impossible.

- Because PBTE is a continuing process rather than a fixed set of products, educational leaders desiring to stimulate changes in the direction of performance-based approaches should both define appropriate roles for themselves in that process, and model the values and processes congruent with a performance-based approach.

NARROWNESS IN THE APPLICATION OF A PERFORMANCE-BASED APPROACH

- The Committee believes that more experimentation is needed in the application of a performance-based approach to other areas of educational personnel development:

  - to other aspects of preparation programs for classroom teachers, e.g., to general studies and specialization components;

  - to preparation programs for other types of educational personnel, e.g., to the preparation of administrators, guidance and counseling personnel, curriculum specialists, and to the preparation of campus-based and school-based teacher educators; and

  - to the in-service education of teachers and other professional school personnel.

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